

ERIGERON BELLIOIDES (ASTERACEAE), NEW TO FLORIDA AND THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

Through field work spanning a six-year period, *Erigeron bellioides* has been documented from several widely scattered localities in Miami-Dade County, Florida. A description, localities, associated species, and photographs are included.

RESUMEN

Mediante un trabajo de campo durante un periodo de seis años, *Erigeron bellioides* ha sido documentado de varias localidades diseminadas en el condado de Miami-Dade, Florida. Se incluyen una descripción, localidades, especies asociadas, fotografías y una ilustración.

Erigeron bellioides DC. grows outside of cultivation in southern Florida (Fig. 1). The collections cited below are apparently the first records from Florida as well as the continental USA. The species was not included or mentioned in any of the following major floristic summaries: Correll and Johnston (1970), Cronquist (1980), Cronquist et al. (1994), Hickman (1993), Long and Lakela (1976), Wiggins (1980), Wunderlin and Hansen (2003), USDA-NRCS (2009).

Erigeron bellioides is native to the Greater Antilles in the southern Caribbean region (Wagner et al. 1999). It occurs on Cuba, Hispanola, and Puerto Rico (Loigier et al. 1982). It also occurs in the Bahama Archipelago (Correll & Correll 1996). The species has become established on some of the Hawaiian Islands as well as other Pacific islands (PIER 2009). I personally observed the species naturalized on the Hawaiian islands of Kauai and Oahu in May of 2004. *Erigeron bellioides* is referred to as “bellorita” in parts of its native range. Members of the genus often are referred to as “fleabanes.”

Voucher specimens: **Florida. Miami-Dade Co.:** 10 May 2000, *Mears* 4725 (DOV, FTG, USF); 11 Dec 2005, *Mears* 4986 (DOV, FTG, USF); 4 Nov 2003, *Mears* 4836 (DOV, FTG, USF); 20 Nov 2005, *Mears* 4971 (DOV, FTG, USF); 11 Dec 2005, *Mears* 4988 (DOV, FTG, USF); 2 Dec 2005, *Mears* 4979 (DOV, FTG, USF).

The plants of *Erigeron bellioides* have been observed flowering throughout the year in south Florida and were growing on grassy roadsides and medians of parking areas, in damp to wet soil at all of the sites. The following species were associated: *Kyllinga brevifolia* Rottb., *Paspalum setaceum* Michx., *Eleusine indica* (L.) Gaertn., *Dichondra caroliniensis* Michx., *Pilea microphylla* (L.) Liebm., *Coronopus didymus* (L.) Sm., *Drymaria cordata* (L.) Willd. ex Schult., *Calyptocarpus vialis* Less., *Synadrella nodiflora* (L.) Gaertn., *Youngia japonica* (L.) DC., *Spermacoce verticillata* L., and *Oldenlandia corymbosa* L.

The following description of *Erigeron bellioides* is based on (Wagner et al. 1999; Correll & Correll 1996) and on personal observations made of the species as it occurs within Miami-Dade County. Plants with an oblique rootstock 1–3 cm long, sparingly and loosely villous throughout. Stems simple or few-branched, ascending or stoloniform, 4–10 cm long. Basal leaves rosulate, with a conspicuously margined petiole usually longer than the blade, blades suborbicular to broadly ovate, to ca. 3 cm long and wide, entire to obscurely few-toothed; cauline leaves few, much reduced, and mostly obovate to oblong. Heads solitary or 2–3; involucre 3–3.5 mm high, ca. 5 mm broad; phyllaries in ca. 2 series, linear, acute, strigillose. Rays white, barely as long as the phyllaries, tightly coiling at maturity. Achenes elliptic, flat, about 1 mm long, puberulent. Pappus brownish, about 1.5 mm long.

This species is distinctive among *Erigeron* species in the USA in its combination of annual duration, very small size, spatulate leaves arranged in a basal rosette, and much reduced cauline leaves.

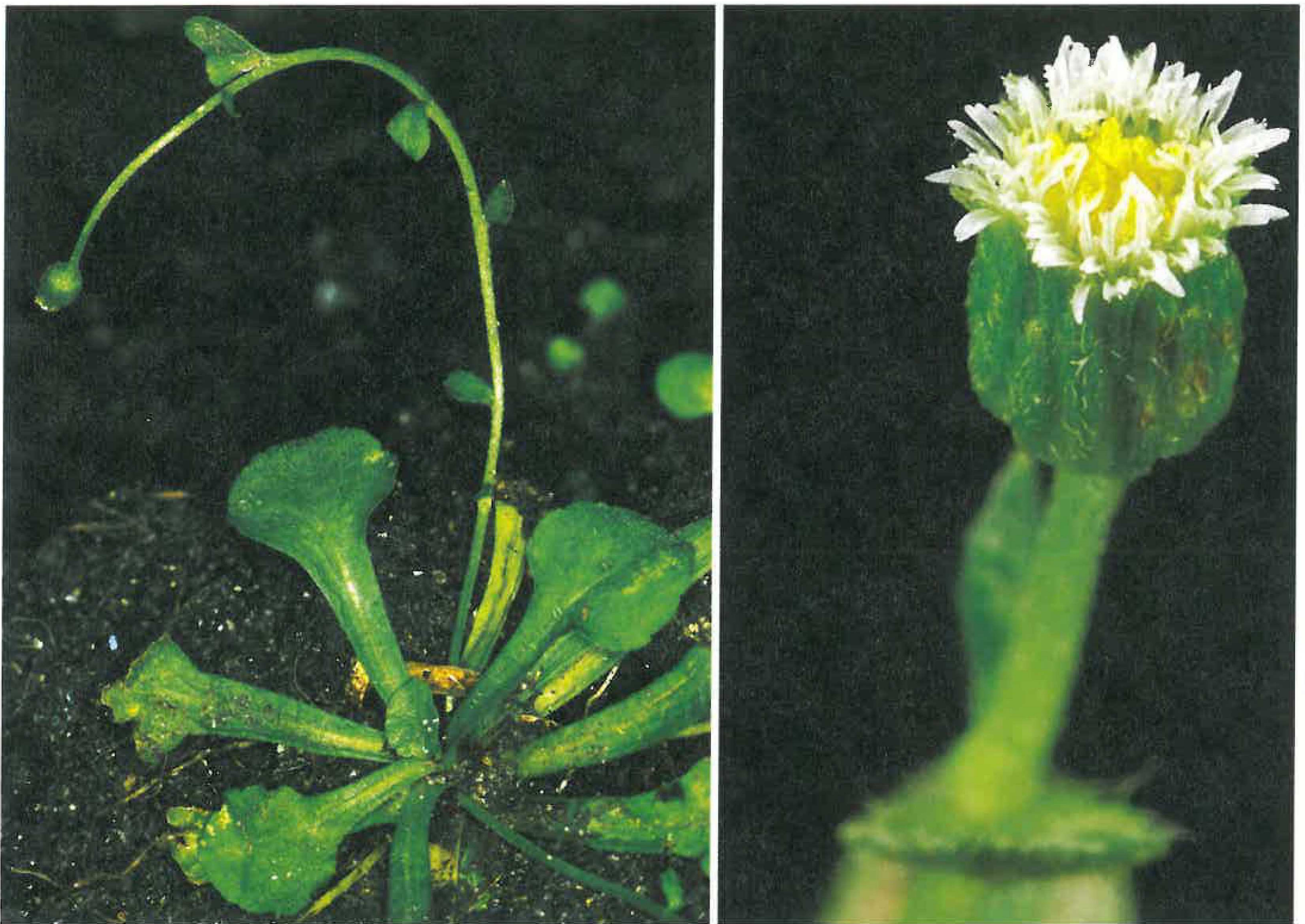


FIG. 1. Photographs of *Erigeron bellioides*, Miami-Dade County, Florida. Habit, Mears 4725 (left); close up of flower (right, 19 Oct 2009). Photographs by Randy L. Mears.

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